

THE WARRANTY GROUP

RES PowerFuse Enables Desktop Transformation and Empowers Users to Manage Their Own Workspace

“RES PowerFuse enables our administrators and users to work together in managing the whole windows desktop. RES PowerFuse has bridged the gap of the age-old conflict between the IT department and the business requirements to enable both to work as one; the whole adaptability that RES PowerFuse provides empowers our users to be happy and productive with their user workspace. Ultimately, RES PowerFuse has enabled us to deliver the desktop transformation strategy that the business required.”

Anil Sakaria, Infrastructure Manager, Europe, The Warranty Group.

OVERVIEW

Anil Sakaria is Infrastructure Manager, Europe for The Warranty Group (TWG), the world's leading single-source provider for the underwriting, administration and marketing of service contracts and related benefits. With the global market intelligence of 2,000 employees in 36 countries, and with 45 years of experience, they develop industry-leading solutions for manufacturers, retailers and distributors of autos, consumer electronics, medical devices, fitness equipment, power tools, appliances and home systems, as well as credit card enhancements and travel programs. They focus on value creation for each client with every transaction.



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SITUATION

Mr. Sakaria is responsible for all infrastructure at TWG Europe, from back-end servers, networks, telephony and call centres to desktops. He has a team of 11 to support him and together they are responsible for approximately 500 desktop users across Europe. Around 300 users are thin-client desktops, about 100 are standard PC desktops and the remainder are remote users. Having been a Citrix 'house' for over 7 years, Mr. Sakaria had found some inflexibility within the Citrix environment from a management point of view; certain bespoke applications wouldn't work on Citrix which led the user experience to be very static and limited the adaptability of the overall system. Over the years his Citrix engineers had evaluated a number of solutions in the market to address this issue, but none met their stringent requirements of manageability and flexibility, whilst providing an outstanding user experience. As Mr. Sakaria mentions, "When you embark upon any desktop transformation strategy, ours being a thin-client roll out, you discover that, with the best will in the world, Citrix doesn't offer the full flexibility needed to migrate all of your users to the new platform."

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Having to maximise his available budget and ensure return on investment, Mr. Sakaria said RES Software got his attention as it seemed to do all the things he couldn't achieve with Citrix alone. Working with RES Software Gold Partner, Alchemy Systems International, Mr. Sakaria's team rolled out a small pilot of RES PowerFuse. This took about 2 months and they deliberately targeted some of their more problematic users, who historically couldn't move to Citrix due to application issues. Mr. Sakaria comments, "It was very comforting to know a local company that appreciated our predicament and challenges. The excellent RES Software skill set made the evaluation and transition to deployment very easy."

SOLUTION

The pilot of RES PowerFuse took about two months; starting with a handful of users within different areas of the business. TWG has a hub spoke topology out of Egham in the UK with no local services in the European sites. As all desktops are run out of the UK, the users need a response time from their desktop that appears local, and RES PowerFuse provides that by optimising the performance of the user's desktop as well as the applications they use. "We found that Citrix did not run optimally over a WAN, by deploying RES PowerFuse we have gone from having historically unhappy, very vocal users to users that are now championing RES PowerFuse to their colleagues," remarks Mr. Sakaria. "Prior to implementing RES PowerFuse, we were running five different desktops and our number one goal was to have a single desktop strategy. We now have a single desktop in eight different European countries and in each local language. The users feel in control of their desktop and my team is able to better manage user settings, drive mappings, applications and shared resources."

BENEFIT

RES PowerFuse has empowered TWG users to manage their own desktop and they feel in control. Productivity has significantly increased as users are now experiencing a 'local' desktop environment. This time last year, Mr. Sakaria's team had on average 200 open support calls a day. Now, support

calls have hit an all time low, with an average of only 40 open calls a day – and none of them are related to issues with the thin-client estate. This marks a 100% call reduction due to RES PowerFuse!

Mr. Sakaria is also delighted with a few additional benefits that he hadn't envisioned when initially rolling out RES PowerFuse. He now has the ability to work with applications through RES PowerFuse that are not written for a thin-client architecture and can now be delivered into the user's desktop. Additionally, in the initial pilot process, the team had not evaluated the Workspace Extender option that is a component of RES PowerFuse. Historically, a number of users could not move to thin-clients as they were using applications that were resource intensive and had to run on a PC. With Workspace Extender they can still have their desktop PC and leave their heavy applications running on the PC, but reverse 'publish' them into their remote desktop. This unique solution enables TWG to gain even further ROI from their RES PowerFuse investment.

"RES PowerFuse has really enabled us to get inside the user's desktop. We previously had issues with grammar and dictionaries for our colleagues in mainland Europe as they naturally want to write in native language. RES Software has given us the flexibility to deliver this and has totally met my expectations. We have not come across a situation that RES Software cannot overcome for us and I only wish I'd found it sooner," states Mr. Sakaria.

FUTURE PLANS

Currently, Mr. Sakaria's team is evaluating Windows Server 2008 for the back-end and trialling Windows 7 on the desktop. If the Windows 7 trial is successful, TWG will migrate in the third or fourth quarter of this year (2010) and RES PowerFuse will enable this next desktop transformation for the group.